

TOPIC: RECOMMEND APPROVAL TO OFFER SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER ENDORSEMENT AT METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

PREPARED BY: DR. ROBERT MITCHELL, ACADEMIC POLICY OFFICER FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION

I. SUMMARY

This item recommends approval to offer School Social Worker (11.07) endorsement at Metropolitan State University of Denver.

II. BACKGROUND

Pursuant to C.R.S. §23-1-121 the Colorado Commission on Higher Education considers approval of all educator preparation programs at public and private institutions of higher education, after receiving an affirmative recommendation from the State Board of Education. The process for initial approval of new educator preparation programs is as follows: Colorado Department of Education (CDE) conducts a review of the endorsement program to ensure that its content is designed and implemented in a manner that will enable a candidate to meet the requirements for licensure in Colorado (C.R.S. §22-60.5). CDE then makes a recommendation to the State Board of Education, which then makes a recommendation to the department. Upon receiving an affirmative recommendation, the department reviews the proposed program for the following statutory performance criteria: a comprehensive admission system; ongoing advising and screening of candidates; integration of theory and practice in coursework and field-based training; supervised field-based experience; and assessment of candidates' subject matter and professional knowledge and ability to apply the professional knowledge base [C.R.S. §23-1-121(2)].

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

The Colorado State Board of Education approved the content of Metropolitan State University of Denver's School Social Worker (11.07) endorsement program at its February 12, 2014 meeting. CDE staff transmitted its affirmative recommendation to the department.

This program supports the development of school social workers within the university's existing Masters of Social Work (M.S.W.) degree program. Coursework is aligned to provide theoretical and practical training for social workers wishing to be employed within an educational environment. Pursuant to C.R.S. §23-1-121(2), department staff reviewed the proposal and

confirmed it meets the statutory performance criteria. The following is summarized from the institution's proposal:

1. **Comprehensive admission system:** Admission requirements for endorsement correlate to admission requirements to the M.S.W. program currently being offered at the university. These admission criteria include: a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher, receipt of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university, completed liberal arts coursework that includes specialized study in the social sciences, humanities, sciences and statistics.
2. **Ongoing screening and advising:** Faculty and staff within the Department of Social Work advise students and applicants throughout the process. Dr. Christian Itin at the university leads and directs advising processes within the department and interacts with students and staff on a regular basis to ensure adequate progression toward desired educational outcomes. The institution also provides supplemental information on their web-site to ensure transparency regarding expectations and course sequencing for program completion.
3. **Course work and field-based training:** The endorsement program focuses on seven key areas within the department and supports student development and training to perform within an educational setting. These areas of focus include: appropriate assessment and intervention skills within an educational environment, evidence-based practice, ethical decision-making, scientific inquiry within a k-12 environment, cultural sensitivity/global awareness as a component of contemporary education, leadership and teamwork, personal reflection and self-correction.
4. **Candidate skills and content knowledge:** Candidates progress through three phases of development as a school social worker. These include foundational coursework, coursework within a concentration and fieldwork within an educational setting. The progression of coursework and experiential education support student development throughout the program.
5. **Continual improvement:** The Department of Social Work at Metropolitan State University of Denver supports multiple initiatives for continual improvement. These include an annual assessment processes, student feedback and evaluations, ethical review through the university's Institutional Review Board and an intensive programmatic review every seven years. Mechanisms and leadership is in place to actuate programmatic changes as necessary and to support program development and student achievement.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission approves the School Social Worker (11.07) endorsement program at Metropolitan State University of Denver.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-1-121-Commission directive - approval of educator preparation programs – review

(2) The commission shall adopt policies establishing the requirements for educator preparation programs offered by institutions of higher education. The department shall work in cooperation with the state board of education in developing the requirements for educator preparation programs. At a minimum, the requirements shall ensure that each educator preparation program complies with section 23-1-125, is designed on a performance-based model, and includes:

(a) A comprehensive admission system that includes screening of a candidate's dispositions for the field in which he or she is seeking licensure, consideration of a candidate's academic preparation for entry into his or her desired endorsement area or areas, and preadmission advising for students who are considering becoming candidates. The department shall work in collaboration with the programs to define any dispositions considered to be appropriate for educators.

(b) Ongoing advising and screening of candidates by practicing educators or faculty members;

(c) Course work and field-based training that integrates theory and practice and educates candidates in the methodologies, practices, and procedures of standards-based education, as described in parts 4 and 10 of article 7 of title 22, C.R.S., and specifically in teaching to the state academic standards adopted pursuant to section 22-7-406, C.R.S., or, beginning December 15, 2012, teaching to the state preschool through elementary and secondary education standards adopted pursuant to section 22-7-1005, C.R.S.;

(d) A requirement that, during the course of the preparation program, each teacher candidate in an initial licensure program complete a minimum of eight hundred hours, each principal and administrator candidate complete a minimum of three hundred hours, and each other advanced degree or add-on endorsement candidate complete appropriate supervised field-based experience that relates to predetermined learning standards and includes best practices and national norms related to the candidate's endorsement;

(e) A requirement that each candidate, prior to graduation, must demonstrate the skills required for licensure, as specified by rule of the state board of education pursuant to section 22-2-109 (3), C.R.S., in the manner specified by rule of the state board;

(f) Comprehensive, ongoing assessment including evaluation of each candidate's subject matter and professional knowledge and ability to demonstrate skill in applying the professional knowledge base.